

**Families and Education Levy RFQ Information Sessions Q&A**  
**January 2012**

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**QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBMISSIONS (including Data Sample)**

**Q: Is the page limit single- or double-spaced? Do pages need to be single-sided or double-sided?**

**A:** The page limit is five pages, single-sided. You may use either single- or double-spacing.

**Q: Does the page limit for the RFQs include the information requested in the RFPI?**

**A:** No, the (optional) RFPI has its own limit of five pages and does not count towards the RFQ page limit.

**Q: How many copies should an agency submit? How should the electronic copy be submitted?**

**A:** An agency must submit five hard copies and an electronic copy of its response. An agency must email the electronic copy to [EducationOffice@seattle.gov](mailto:EducationOffice@seattle.gov)

**Q: Is a response on-time if it is postmarked before the deadline?**

**A:** Not necessarily. The responses must be received by 4:30 p.m. on February 14, 2012.

**Q: Should an agency address all aspects of Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support listed in the RFQ document?**

**A:** An agency's response should address areas for which it seeks to partner with schools in using Levy funds. The items listed in the RFQ are not exhaustive, nor is it intended that an agency must incorporate all aspects (though some agencies may) in its response.

**Q: Should an agency focus on the functions they are best at?**

**A:** Yes. Schools will be matching their needs with the functions agencies identify as their strengths.

**Q: Is there a page limit or preferred format to the sample data report?**

**A:** No. There is no specific page limit or preferred format for the data sample report. The sample data report is intended to assess whether an organization meets the criteria listed in the RFQ. If we need further clarification, we will call you during the telephone clarification period.

**Q: Can an agency reference work we've done in middle and high schools in the Elementary RFQ?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: If an agency serves students from preschool to 21 years old, how many RFQs should it submit?**

**A:** Agencies that provide social, emotional, behavioral and family support for elementary, middle, and high school students should submit two RFQs: one RFQ for elementary and another for middle school/high school.

**Q: Is the request for references a request for an exhaustive list of groups an agency has worked with? What is the City looking for?**

**A:** An agency should list partners that can speak most clearly to the work the agency describes in the RFQ.

**Q: Is it a requirement that somebody from the agency must complete the RFQ submission or can the agency contract for help?**

**A:** No, there is no requirement on who should complete the RFQ submission, but it is in the best interest of the agency that it is someone who understands the work and can answer any questions about the work. In review, the focus will be on the whether the criteria are met.

#### **SCHOOLS/FUNDING/PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND AGENCIES**

**Q: How many elementary schools will receive funding? How much funding will they receive?**

**A:** In this first year, up to four elementary schools will be chosen as Innovation Schools. We plan to add up to four Innovation Schools every additional year for the duration of this Levy, totaling approximately 23. Funding for Elementary Innovation Schools will range between \$200,000 - \$300,000 for each school.

**Q: Which four schools will receive Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support funding?**

**A:** The schools have not yet been chosen. Schools will apply for funding through the RFI process.

**Q: If only four elementary schools will be selected this year, won't there be a higher demand for funding than there is supply?**

**A:** Yes. The process to receive funding is competitive. In the first year, we will select the four elementary schools that put forth the strongest RFI to be innovation schools. We will add up to four more elementary schools each year up to approximately 23 for the duration of this Levy.

**Q: How many middle and high schools will receive funding? How much funding will they receive?**

**A:** There will be approximately five Innovation Middle Schools and approximately five Innovation High Schools for the duration of the Levy. The funding range for Innovation Middle Schools is \$300,000-\$450,000 per year. The funding range for Innovation High Schools is \$200,000-\$350,000 per year. (The bulk of funding for high schools is for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students.)

There are also funds available for middle school Linkage Sites for use towards out of school time, academic support, and social, emotional, and behavioral support. The funding for Linkage Sites varies based on the needs and plans of the school. More information will be forthcoming.

**Q: Is the funding for one year or for the length of the Levy?**

**A:** Once a school is selected to receive funds, it will continue to receive Levy funds for the duration of the Levy as long as it continues to meet its outcome and indicator targets set by the contract.

**Q: How do K-8 schools fit into this process?**

**A:** An eligible K-8 school may apply to be an Elementary Innovation School, with the funding focused on K-5<sup>th</sup> grade, a Middle School Linkage Site, with the funding focused on 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders, or both. Organizations wishing to provide social, emotional, behavioral and/or family support services in a K-8 school, and who plan to serve both elementary and middle schools students in that school, must complete both the elementary and middle/high RFQ.

**Q: What are Linkage Sites?**

**A:** Linkage Sites may include all middle schools and K-8 who are not designated as Levy Innovation Middle Schools. Potential funding for Linkage Sites will vary, depending on the size and needs of the students in each school.

**Q: Can a school receive both Innovation School and Linkage Site funds?**

**A:** A comprehensive middle school cannot receive both Innovation School and Linkage Site funds. However, a K-8 school could be selected as an Elementary Innovation School and also received Middle School Linkage Site funds.

**Q: Is the funding for the middle and high schools every year for the duration of the Levy? How might schools lose funding?**

**A:** Schools selected in the first year have the potential to renew their contract every year for the duration of the Levy. Levy funding is dependent on the schools achieving their outcomes and indicators. Schools that do not achieve the outcomes and indicators they commit to will be defunded or have funding amounts decreased.

**Q: If an agency submits an RFQ response, is it eligible to partner with Linkage Sites?**

**A:** If an agency qualifies through the RFQ process, the agency is eligible to partner with both Innovation Schools and Linkage Sites.

**Q: Does the Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support Levy funding go directly to agencies? How will agencies receive funds?**

A: For Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support services, funding will go through schools. Agencies must first be qualified through the RFQ. Qualified agencies then must partner with schools going through the RFI process. Schools chosen to receive funds will work with qualified agencies to provide services for their focus students.

If an agency is providing services for refugee, immigrant and/or Native American populations, it may decide to participate in the RFI process for Community-Based Family Support for Refugee, Immigrant and Native American populations. Through that RFI, funds will go directly to the selected agencies.

**Q: Are funds available solely for new programs or also for existing unfunded programs? How will a school divide up its Levy funds?**

A: Levy funds are not limited to new programs. Schools are responsible for proposing to OFE how to allocate their funds. A school may choose whether to partner with one agency or many agencies.

**Q: Should agencies and schools be having conversations now about which students to focus upon with potential Levy funds?**

A: Yes, it is recommended that agencies start having conversations with schools as soon as possible.

**Q: Would the students who would be served be identified by the school or by the agency?**

A: In the RFPI, an agency will provide general information about the students the agency typically serves. The specific students will be a negotiation between the school and the agency during the RFI process.

**Q: Is there any guarantee that the school an agency chooses to partner with will receive Levy funds?**

A: No.

**Q: Is this process separate from the RFI process? Do agencies participate in the RFI process?**

A: For Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support services, agencies will go through the RFQ process and schools will go through the RFI process.

After the RFQ process is complete and the list of qualified agencies is compiled, we will work with Seattle Public Schools to host regional meetings for schools and qualified agencies to meet and discuss the RFI process.

**Q: When schools are applying, are they judged based on the number of students that are served or overall improvement in the various categories?**

A: We will be going into more detail about the RFI once the RFI is released.

**Q: Once the RFQ process is behind us and before the RFI process is completed, will you be bringing qualified agencies together with principals?**

A: Once the RFQ process is finished and the list of qualified agencies is compiled, we will be working with Seattle Public Schools to host regional meetings to bring together principals and qualified agencies.

**Q: Is there any intent to break up the Levy dollars according to regions?**

A: No.

**Q: Is there a mutual agreement process somewhere between the agency and the schools? Can a qualified agency turn down a school?**

A: The school doesn't have to partner with a particular agency, though any agency a school partners with must be qualified. A qualified agency does not have to partner with any particular school.

**Q: If a school is already working with an agency, should it encourage the agency to participate in the RFQ process?**

A: If a school wishes to use Levy funds for a particular agency, that agency must be qualified through the RFQ process.

**Q: May schools choose to partner with many agencies or must they choose one agency?**

A: Schools may choose one agency or many agencies and will choose to partner with qualified agencies that will best help them achieve their outcomes and indicators.

**Q: How are the schools selected for funding?**

A: Schools will go through a competitive RFI process that we are finalizing now. For middle schools and high schools, the pool is much smaller and we will provide a list of schools eligible to participate in the RFI process soon but eligibility to participate in the RFI process is not a guarantee of funding.

**Q: Which schools are eligible to participate in the RFI process?**

A: We will be using Seattle Public Schools' segmentation reports to decide which elementary schools are eligible. Middle and High schools will be based on a combination of the school segmentation report and Seattle Public Schools' risk factor reports. We hope to post a list of eligible schools on our Web site by January 27. OFE also has a data report available that shows how schools are performing on certain indicators.

#### **RFPI (including Budget Form)**

**Q: I'm already partnered with many schools that are familiar with my agency's work. Should I still submit an RFPI?**

A: The RFPI is intended to provide schools with information about the work of qualified agencies. The RFPI is an opportunity for an agency to educate schools about its work but it is not required and will not be evaluated.

**Q: How does an agency provide budget information if it doesn't know which schools it will partner with and, therefore, how many students would be served?**

A: The budget template in the RFPI is structured such that a school has enough information to estimate costs regardless of the number of focus students it has. In the RFPI, the agency is asked for information such as the smallest number of students it needs to provide its services, base costs, and incremental costs.

**Q: If I have different incremental costs for different programs, may I add more rows to list the incremental costs for each program?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Would the base budget be the existing number of students the agency is currently serving?**

A: An agency may choose to use the existing number of students served as the base but that conveys to schools that the existing number of students is the minimum number of students an agency can serve.

**Q: How does an agency access the RFPI form?**

A: The RFPI is available on the OFE website.  
[<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/education/rfq.htm>]

**Q: If an agency has already identified a school it wants to partner with and is not looking to expand into other schools, should it complete an RFPI?**

A: The RFPI is not required and will not be evaluated. The purpose of the RFPI is to inform schools about an agency's work and to facilitate partnerships between schools and qualified agencies. If that purpose does not apply to your agency, the agency may choose not to complete an RFPI with no penalty to it in the RFQ process.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Q: How will the City ensure the services provided by agencies are grounded in research and/or best practices?**

A: The RFQ asks for prior experience for the services the agency identifies, as well how an agency has used data to track, report, and continuously improve student outcomes. An agency may be pursuing a very innovative approach that has not yet been established as a best practice or does not have a great deal of research behind it. In all cases, the agency must demonstrate experience tracking data points that can be linked to achieving the outcomes and indicators for focus students, as well as the other criteria listed in the RFQ.

**Q: Is there any place for an independent school in this Levy process?**

A: You must be a Seattle Public School, or an agency trying to partner with a Seattle Public School, to participate in this Levy process.

**Q: Do you have any information about the Community Based Family Support RFI for Refugee, Immigrant and Native American populations?**

A: Agencies providing community-based family support for refugee, immigrant and Native American populations can apply directly for those funds through an RFI process coming this spring. The City will contract directly with agencies for these services (rather than going through schools). The funding will be about \$400,000 a year.

**Q: Can an agency apply through the RFQ process and the Community-Based Family Support RFI for Refugee, Immigrant and Native American RFI?**

A: Yes.

**Q: How will the Levy address children in immigrant and refugee communities served by small organizations that may find it difficult to meet the qualifications listed? Will the qualifications change?**

A: We will have an RFI specifically for agencies that serve refugee, immigrant and Native American populations.

**Q: Will the qualifications change in future years?**

A: There may be some small modifications but these qualifications for Levy funds will remain largely the same.

**Q: What types of services is the City looking for?**

A: The City's will qualify agencies. Schools will decide what types of services they need based on the needs of their students.

**Q: Are birth-5 programs part of this Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support RFQ process?**

A: No. There will be a separate Early Learning RFI process later in the year.

**Q: Does the City have a plan to assist smaller organizations find larger partners?**

A: No, but we are aware of the issue and are considering options for next year's process. In the many workshops hosted, we have encouraged smaller organizations to work together to try and mitigate overhead, data-gathering, and other costs.

**Q: If an agency is having trouble filling out the RFQ paperwork, where can they go for assistance?**

A: To ensure fairness in the process, the City cannot provide any assistance to a specific agency.

**Q: If an agency is qualified this year, does it have to reapply again in following years?**

A: Once an agency is qualified, the agency will be placed on the approved provider list and will remain on that list for the duration of the Levy as long as it continues to achieve its outcome and indicator results. If agency consistently underperforms, OFE will require provider to go through RFQ process again.

**Q: Does the Seattle Public School District have to fill out an RFQ?**

A: No, we will contract directly with Seattle Public Schools where appropriate. In the Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support process, we will be moving to a model very similar to what has happened in the middle and high schools – the principal will be responsible for developing a work plan and held accountable for outcome and indicator results.

**Q: What is the RFQ review process? How high is the bar for passing the pass/fail review?**

A: The bar is set high intentionally. An agency must meet all of the criteria listed in the RFQ to pass.

**Q: Will smaller agencies be overlooked? Is the evaluation really based on the criteria listed or will larger agencies be favored?**

A: There is no preference granted based on the size of an agency. If an agency meets the criteria, it will be qualified regardless of size. Schools will then choose which qualified agencies they want to partner with.

**Q: Are agencies that provide services under the umbrella of a larger organization required to go through the RFQ process directly or are they able to be named as a partner organization in the umbrella organization's RFQ?**

A. All agencies that expect to receive more than \$5,000 total annually in Levy funds through relationships with schools must submit an RFQ response. This threshold applies to education services for Elementary Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Family Support; Middle and High School Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Support; Elementary, Middle and High School Expanded Early Learning Opportunities; and Middle and High School College and Career Readiness and Planning.

**Q: Part of our agency's success has been bundling services with other agencies. From the umbrella organization point of view, should I include other partner agencies in my RFQ?**

A. Each agency will have to submit an RFQ if they expect to receive more than \$5,000 in Levy funds annually, but agencies should feel free to refer to the partnerships with other organizations they work with.

**Q: We are a small agency that cannot meet these RFQ requirements. Can larger organizations subcontract with us?**

A. See above.